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LB 99

SENATOR LYNCH: ...thing, may or may not be. It's going to be up to you to save your soul, I hope you don't expect government to do it for you. If you think gambling is evil, you better not do it. And I think it's stupid myself, to be completely frank. But on the other hand, if some of these people that really can't afford and don't want to get involved in high stakes gambling can, in fact, play a bingo game once in a while, it's not all bad at all. It's a form of recreation. They see their friends, but it also supports some charitable organizations. So I would say to any municipalities that would oppose it, because I understand the state is not, that in fact they can, on the one hand, say how terrible gambling is, and on the other hand sit back and collect this money from these people that are taking whatever little pleasure they can from playing bingo. I think this is important. It's insignificant financially to the state, and I think even to the cities, and I hope you would support it, help it, it would help preserve those charitable organizations that depend on this source of revenue.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Lynch. The Chair recognizes Senator Schellpeper to open on the committee amendments. (See Standing Committee amendment, AM8084 on page 975 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR SCHELPEPER: Madam Chairman and members, LB 99, as it was originally introduced, would have increased the state bingo tax on keno and the charitable lotteries and raffle from 2 to 3 percent, and would have also repealed the statutes which give local communities the authority to regulate charitable lotteries and keno games in their local communities. The committee amendments strike everything but the bingo tax reduction. And that bingo tax would be reduced from 6 percent to 3 percent on the city, and the city tax would be eliminated altogether, which is 2 percent. But it would still stay at 3 percent for the state. The fiscal note would lose about \$600,000 annually for the state. Omaha would lose about 140,000, and Lincoln about 60,000, so it's not a big reduction in their revenue. The recommendation on a bingo tax has been around since we did a study in 1992 and we've had it introduced every year since then. Last year we had a bill introduced, LB 687, and it was advanced out of the committee with the same committee amendments as are in LB 99. It failed to advance late in the session when there